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SF 502 The Spiritual Life of the Minister

Stephen L. Martyn

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Martha, Martha, you are worried and distracted by many things; there is need of only one thing. Mary has chosen the better part... (Luke 10.41-42).

THE SPIRITUAL LIFE OF THE MINISTER

3 Hours Credit [Note: This syllabus will slightly change]

SF 502 Spring 2008

Stephen L. Martyn, Ph.D. Steve_Martyn@asburyseminary.edu
(859) 858-2051

Office: Beeson Center 316

Enrollment Limited to 30 Students

WELCOME

Welcome to SF 502 Spring 08, "The Spiritual Life of the Minister." I am looking forward to journeying together with you this spring as we look at some of the great challenges and huge opportunities of ministry in the early part of the twenty-first century. This course is based on the presupposition that the Lord is calling ministers of the gospel to be grounded in the historic Christian faith and competent in the everyday living of that faith. It is designed to give both foundational principles and application of those principles for a lifetime of faithful and fruitful ministry.

I very much want us to move through this *Spiritual Formation* course as a Christian community linked together through prayer, Christian conferencing, and small group sharing. Our semester holds the promise of providing an arena for transformation of heart and ministry as we seek to place God first in all areas of our lives.

COURSE DESCRIPTION

This course proposes to help students delve into and apply Christian spirituality to their everyday lives and ministries. Over a span of four months, we will swim in seven major spiritual streams:

1. Holy Leisure (*the conditions necessary for a God-centered life*);
2. Ministry From The Overflow (*service that does not deplete*);
3. The Well Ordered Life (*balance in all things*);
4. The Big Rocks (*first things first on a daily basis*);
5. Turning From Pride (*humility*);

6. Speaking The Truth In Love (*spiritual direction*);
7. Leading From Within A Family (*team*).

All of these areas are essential to a joyful life in Christ and are necessary for vocational faithfulness. Through reading, reflection, interaction, and integration, we will seek to hear and obey the whisperings of the Holy Spirit who is ever wooing us into increasing Christ-likeness.

COMPETENCIES TO BE DEVELOPED BY THE STUDENT

Students taking this course should first come to a place of knowing that they not only have permission from the Lord, but, indeed, a command from the Lord to orient their entire lives in such a way as to have time and space on a daily basis to hear God speaking to their hearts. The primary competency here is the development of dispositions that facilitate ***devotional living***.

A second category of competency to be developed centers around spiritual discernment. Students should be able to appraise why they feel driven to “busyness” and “hyper-performance.” More importantly, they should be able to appraise what a life of balance will mean for their individual situations. Discernment should then result in at least a beginning sense of vocational fidelity within the context of ministry. The competency here is a clear sense of ***vocational fidelity*** in the midst of numerous demands.

Thirdly, students should understand the necessity of a foundational posture of repentance and dependence. ***Humility*** is the greatest competency necessary to move toward maturity (holiness) in Christ.

Fourthly, students should make progress in developing the heart dispositions of *praise* and *thanksgiving*. These dispositions are critical for ***appreciative living*** (a foundational attitude of the heart that correctly apprehends and values the grace of God at work in one’s life-situation).

Finally, this course should help equip students to firmly step away from isolationist tendencies by moving them toward ***covenant community*** and ***team ministry*** with fellow pilgrims on the journey in Christ.

REQUIRED TEXTBOOKS

Cassian, John. *Conferences* (The Classics of Western Spirituality). New York: Paulist Press, 1985. (208 pages)

Harper, Steve. *Devotional Life in the Wesleyan Tradition (A Workbook)*. Nashville: Upper Room Books, 1995. (159 pages)

MacDonald, Gordon. *Rebuilding Your Broken World* (Expanded Edition With Study Guide). Nashville: Thomas Nelson Publishers, 1990. (235 pages)

Peterson, Eugene H. *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning to the Art of Spiritual Direction*. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1989. (171 pages)

Van Kaam, Adrian and Susan Muto. *Formation Theology Volume One: Foundations of Christian Formation*. Pittsburgh: Epiphany Association, 2004. (306 pages)

COURSE REQUIREMENTS

The course requirements for SF502 revolve around completion of the assignments embedded within each of the seven modules. These assignments include:

1. Reading the assigned components within each of the seven modules (Articles will be posted in The Course Center).
2. Reading the five (5) assigned textbooks.
3. Interacting with your Small Group.
4. Completing the One Month Time Chart (see example within).
5. Completing three integration papers that both highlight and apply major insights from each module to your personal life. See due dates below.
6. Completing a final integration paper of 4 to 5 pages in which a Rule of Life is mapped out and in which the most significant insights from the course are applied to your life and ministry. See due date below.

Writing An Integrative Reflection Paper

An integrative reflection paper can be thought of in terms of a woven tapestry. The “warp” or lengthwise threads can be compared to your given life-situation. What are your immediate circumstances saying to you? All of us are “situated” in the world, which means that it is in and through our particular life-situation that the Lord will speak to us. Remember, however, that this thread of our experience is but half of the tapestry. Caution should be exercised to keep the thread of experience in balance and never allowed to become the whole of a paper.

The “woof” or the crosswise threads can represent our interaction with God’s Word and with ***the course materials*** (including texts, readings, videos, and group interactions). The basic question to ask here is, “What truth is God seeking to speak forth into your life (especially in and through the course materials)?”

Mere reporting of class material or summary of assigned texts would completely miss the point of an integration paper. For God’s Word and for Kingdom insights to truly be transformational they must be applied to our personal lives. When we take these insights and allow them to touch our actual lives then the Lord can use the material of this class to transform us.

In your integration papers I want you to interact with all of the assignments of the module and reflect on the major implications of the course material for you life. These Integrative Reflection papers should be written in 1st person and should strictly avoid any “preaching” posture. In other words, all insights should be applied to **your** life.

All papers must be typed, double-spaced, 1” margin all around, using a 12-point font. Papers must adhere to MLA format [MLA demands a separate “Works Cited” page and internal citations as follows (Martyn 47)].

ASSIGNMENT DUE DATES

Module 1 Integrative Paper:	February 26
Modules 2 & 3 Integrative Paper:	March 25
Modules 4 & 5 Integrative Paper:	April 29
One-Month Time Chart:	March 18
Final Integration paper:	May 13
Reading Report	May 13

Final Integration Project

In this reflection project please articulate the “**Rule of Life**” that you believe the Lord is calling you to incarnate in your everyday living. Your “**Rule**” should, in large sense, be *the application* of this course for your life. You can then support your “**Rule**” by highlighting the major implications of the course for your life and ministry.

A “**Rule of Life**” is simply a covenant agreement with the Lord in which you spell out the major components of your everyday walk. One way to approach this assignment is to ask this simple question, “In light of the impact of all of the course material, how is God calling me to walk as a faithful disciple of Jesus Christ on an everyday basis?”

A “**Rule**” does not have to be long. In fact, a long list of items is normally counterproductive and self-defeating. Let me encourage you to pick out only a few “big rocks” and concentrate on them. Spell them out, and then explicate how they can be implemented in your life.

This “**Rule of Life**” paper can be far more than a mere course wrap up project. It holds the potential of allowing God to strengthen the spiritual foundation of your life.

GRADES

Three reflective integration papers.....	45 points
One Month Time Chart.....	10 points
Small Group discussion & Discussion Center questions.....	10 points

Reading texts, and papers within modules.....	15 points
Final integration paper.....	20 points
	100 total

PLEASE NOTE: LATE PAPERS WILL RECEIVE A 1 POINT REDUCTION PER DAY. PLEASE CONTACT THE PROFESSOR AHEAD OF TIME IF YOU ARE IN NEED OF EXTRA TIME.

Grading will be based on the criteria found in the current ATS Catalog. Grade increments (+/-) fall within the standards below.

- A = Exceptional work: surpassing, markedly outstanding achievement of course objectives.
- B = Good work: strong, significant achievement of course objectives.
- C = Acceptable work: basic, essential achievement of course objectives.
- D = Marginal work: inadequate, minimal achievement of course objectives.
- F = Unacceptable work: failure to achieve course objectives.

EXAMPLE: ONE MONTH TIME RECORD

The week of _____

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6:00					Day Off!!!		Sunday Morning
7:00	Devo time	Devo	Devo	Devo			Sunday School
8:00		Staff Meeting	Funeral				And Worship
9:00	Sermon Prep			Sermon Prep			Service
10:00							
11:00							
12:00	Lunch	Lunch	Funeral Lunch	Lunch Meeting			
1:00	Office Work	Home Visit	Bible Study	Office Work		Sermon Prep	
2:00			Prep Time				
3:00	Home Visit	Counsel Session					
4:00							
5:00							
6:00						Date With	
7:00		Meeting	Bible Study	Home Visit		Spouse	
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							

ONE MONTH TIME RECORD

The week of _____

	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							
11:00							
12:00							
1:00							
2:00							
3:00							
4:00							
5:00							
6:00							
7:00							
8:00							
9:00							
10:00							

RECOMMENDED BIBLIOGRAPHY

Blackaby, Henry, and King, Claude V. *Experiencing God: How To Live The Full Adventure Of Knowing And Doing The Will Of God*. Nashville: Broadman & Holman Publishers, 1994.

Celtic Daily Prayer: Prayers And Readings From The Northumbria Community. Harper San Francisco, 2002.

Clinton, J. Robert. *The Making Of A Leader: Recognizing The Lessons And Stages Of Leadership Development*. Colorado Springs: NavPress, 1988.

Cordeiro, Wayne. *Doing Church As A Team: Launching Effective Ministries Through Teamwork*. Honolulu: New Hope Resources, 1998.

Hayford, Jack. *Pastors Of Promise: Pointing To Character And Hope As The Keys To Fruitful Shepherding*. Ventura: Regal, 1997.

Job, Rueben P. and Shawchuck, Norman. *A Guide To Prayer For Ministers And Other Servants*. Nashville: The Upper Room, 1983.

Jones, E. Stanley. *A Song Of Ascents: A Spiritual Autobiography*. Nashville: Abingdon Press, 1968.

_____. *The Way*. Nashville: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1946.

Mulholland, M. Robert, Jr. *Shaped By The Word: The Power Of Scripture In Spiritual Formation*. Nashville: The Upper Room, 1985.

Muto, Susan Annette. *A Practical Guide To Spiritual Reading*. Pittsburgh: Epiphany Association, 1994.

_____ *Words Of Wisdom For Our World: The*

- Precautions And Counsels Of St. John Of The Cross.*
Washington D.C.: ICS Publications, 1996.
- Muto, Susan and van Kaam, Adrian. *Stress And The Search For Happiness: A New Challenge For Christian Spirituality.*
Pittsburgh: Epiphany Association, 1993.
- _____. *Harnessing Stress: A Spiritual Quest.* Pittsburgh: Epiphany Association, 1993.
- _____. *Healthy And Holy Under Stress: A Royal Road To Wise Living.* Pittsburgh: Epiphany Association, 1993.
- Nouwen, Henri J.M. *In The Name Of Jesus: Reflections On Christian Leadership.* New York: Crossroad, 1989.
- Peterson, Eugene H. *The Contemplative Pastor: Returning To The Art Of Spiritual Direction.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1989.
- _____. *Under The Unpredictable Plant: An Exploration In Vocational Holiness.* Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1992.
- St. Gregory The Great. *Pastoral Care.* New York: Newman Press, 1950.
- Stott, John. *Basic Christian Leadership: Biblical Models Of Church, Gospel And Ministry.* Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 2002.
- Underhill, Evelyn. *The Ways Of The Spirit.* New York: Crossroad, 1999.
- Van Kaam, Adrian. *The Music Of Eternity: Everyday Sounds Of Fidelity.* Notre Dame, Indiana: Ava Maria Press, 1990.
- _____. *The Roots Of Christian Joy.* Denville, New Jersey: Dimension Books, 1985.

Willard, Dallas. *The Divine Conspiracy: Rediscovering Our Hidden Life In God*. Harper San Francisco, 1998.

_____ *Hearing God: Developing A Conversational Relationship With God*. Downers Grove: InterVarsity Press, 1984.

_____ *The Spirit Of The Disciplines: Understanding How God Changes Lives*. San Francisco: Harper & Row Publishers, 1988.

THE SEVEN MODULES

Module 1 *Holy Leisure*

Weeks 1 & 2

February 12-26

- +Begin charting your 1 Month Devotional Patterns
- +Read *Devotional Life In The Wesleyan Tradition: A Workbook*
- +Respond to all questions embedded within the assigned on-line texts within your small group
- +Read "Faith, Hope, Love and Formative Abandonment"
- +Read "The Holy Devise: From the Lips to the Mind to the Heart"
- +Read "Understanding Ego-Projects and the Need to be Needed"
- +Read "The Myth of Omni-Availability"
- +Read "Why are pastors experts on the truth and dropouts on the way?" Peterson, *The Contemplative Pastor*, p. 35
- +Read "First Things First: Unhurried Time With God On A Daily Basis"
- +By February 26 turn in your 3 page Integrative Reflection Paper for Module 1
- +Read van Kaam & Muto (Chapters 1-7)

Module 2 *Ministry From The Overflow*

Weeks 3 & 4

February 26 – March 11

- +Continue charting your 1 Month Devotional Patterns
- +Read Continue reading van Kaam & Muto (Chapters 8-14)
- +Respond within your small group to all questions embedded within the assigned on-line texts
- +Read Allowing Ministry To Flow From Relationship
- +Read Your Call And The Vision That Follows
- +Read The Power House Of Methodism
- +Read We Should Have One Goal In Mind: Acts 13.36
- +Read The Crisis: Every “Yes” Is Tested
- +Read Deformative Abandonment
- +Read Can I Trust The Mystery? (Psalm 100.5 and Psalm 23)
- +Read Form Reception And Form Donation
- +Read The Reservoir And Streams Of Mercy
- +Read The Transcendence Dynamic (Our Hunger For “The More Than”)

Module 3 *The Big Rocks*

Weeks 4 & 5

March 11 - 25

- +By March 18 hand in your 1 Month Devotional Patterns
- +Read Complete van Kaam & Muto (Chapters 15-22)
- +Respond to all questions embedded within the assigned on-line texts
- +Read Form Reception/Form Donation Exercise
- +Read Five Primary Issues Of Balance
- +Read The Second Reformation: Putting The Ministry Back In The Hands Of The Laity
- +Read Daily, Weekly, Annual Sabbath
- +By March 25 turn in your four page Integrative Reflection Paper for Modules 2 & 3

Module 4 *The Big Rocks*

Weeks 6 & 7

March 25 – April 15

- +Read *Conferences*
- +Respond to all questions embedded within the assigned on-line texts
- +Read *Some Of The Fires Of Ministry*
- +Read *Courage*
- +Read *If It's A Truly "Big Rock" Then You Give It Attention On A Daily Basis*
- +Read *With Balance You Are Able To Meet The Heavy Demands Of Ministry*
- +Read *Erosion And Depletion*

Module 5 *Turning From Pride*

Weeks 9 & 10

April 15 - 29

- +Read *Rebuilding Your Broken World*
- +Respond to all questions embedded within the assigned on-line texts
- +Read *Those Terrible "Short-Circuits"*
- +Read *The Apparent Form*
- +Read *Protos!*
- +Read *Penthos*
- +Read *The Wilderness State (Sins Of Commission And Omission)*
- +Read *Peterson: Ministry As A Short Cut To Hell!*
- +By April 29 turn in your four page Integrative Reflection Paper for Modules 4 & 5

Modules 6 & 7 *Speaking The Truth In Love* and *Leading From Within A Family*

Weeks 11, 12 & 13

April 29 – May 13

- +Read *The Contemplative Pastor*
- +Respond to all questions embedded within the assigned on-line texts
- +Read *Maintaining A Buoyant Spirit*

- +Read Performance Based Feedback
- +Read Banks On The River
- +Read Movements Of The Heart
- +Read The False Equations We Live By
- +Read How To Give The Ministry Away: A Discussion Of Lay Pastors
- +Read Your Paul, Barnabas, and Timothy
- +Read Your Worship, Fellowship, And Accountability Families
- +By May 13 turn in your final project The Rule Of Living

Class Participation

SF 502 is a highly interactive class that requires weekly attention by students. You cannot take this course and casually come in and out of class. It will demand your steady attention throughout the semester. Missing more than three classes for whatever reason will result in a failing grade.